



October 2010

# Newsletter

## ***EIRHA Receives HUD Approval as a Housing Counseling Agency***

On July 30, 2010, the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) approved the Eastern Iowa Regional Housing Authority (EIRHA) as a Housing Counseling Agency. EIRHA has met the Department's initial approval criteria and submitted an acceptable housing counseling plan to serve its target area (Dubuque, Delaware, Jackson, Cedar, Clinton and Jones counties). The Department approved the EIRHA to provide Money Debt Management, Pre-purchase Counseling, and Home Improvement and Rehabilitation Counseling in accordance with its counseling plans.

## ***EIRHA Receives I-JOBS Grant***

The Eastern Iowa Regional Housing Authority (EIRHA) was recently awarded an I-JOBS Improved Green Urban Stormwater Best Management Practices grant in the amount of \$11,099.00 from the Iowa Department of Natural Resources (DNR). The grant application submitted by the EIRHA was selected out of a total of 35 grant applications by an Iowa DNR evaluation committee. The requested funds from the 35 grant applications combined to total almost twice the amount of available grant funds.

The grant funds received by the EIRHA were used to construct a rain garden in the city of Dyersville at the Mercy Park Villa Apartments. The installation of the rain garden at the Mercy Park Villa Apartment site will divert an estimated 121,600 gallons of storm water runoff annually; significantly reducing the amount of pollutants entering local streams and groundwater.

### ***current public housing vacancies***

Elderly one-bedroom units in:  
**DeWitt**, 612 13th Street, #104

Family units in:  
**Delmar**, 212 Lincoln Avenue  
2 bedroom SFH

**Hopkinton**, 311 Culver Road  
3 bedroom SFH

**Manchester**, 115 & 122 Ludland Drive  
2 bedroom duplex

113 Nelson Circle  
3 bedroom SFH



### ***if you have questions about anything contained in this newsletter, please contact:***

Mindy Wiley, Family Support Coordinator  
at 563.588.1963 or toll-free at 1.877.588.1963

Mindy Meyers, Family Support Coordinator  
at 563.556.5013 or toll-free at 1.877.656.5013



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## **Self-Sufficiency Programs**

The Eastern Iowa Regional Housing Authority has a Family Self-Sufficiency Program (FSS) for persons on the Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher program, as well as for persons living in the EIRHA's Public Housing units.

On the Family Self-Sufficiency program, participants create several goals with an FSS Coordinator to help reach the goals in their lives. Examples of these goals could include:

- Finding employment
- Obtaining a GED
- Locating daycare assistance
- Improving credit scores
- Budgeting finances
- Working toward home ownership

Not only do FSS program participants benefit from working toward the goals in their lives, there is a possible financial incentive as well.

For more information or to enroll in the FSS program please call Mindy Meyers if you are on the Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher program at (563) 556-5013 or 877-656-5013. If you are a resident at EIRHA's Public Housing units contact Mindy Wiley at (563) 588-1963 or (877) 588-1963.

## **Resident Advisory Board**

One of the goals of the Eastern Iowa Regional Housing Authority (EIRHA) is to have more Public Housing residents involved in the Resident Advisory Board. On this board, members are given an opportunity to voice their opinions on the types of activities EIRHA provides for tenants, and to voice any concerns related to EIRHA. For more information call Mindy Wiley at (563) 588-1963 or (877) 588-1963.

## **Community Service**

HUD PIH Notice 2003-17 requires all non-exempt adult Public Housing residents to participate in eight hours of community service and/or economic self sufficiency activities per month. Exempt residents include those over the age of 62, disabled individuals, working individuals, and those in compliance with the requirements of a state FIP (welfare) program.

Staff of the Eastern Iowa Regional Housing Authority have contacted affected households and are monitoring their activity for compliance.

## **Activities for the Elderly/Disabled**

The Eastern Iowa Regional Housing Authority (EIRHA) is currently in the planning stages for the fall potlucks for Public Housing residents who are currently residing in the elderly/disabled complexes owned by the Housing Authority. If you currently reside in a complex for the elderly and/or disabled owned by the EIRHA, watch your mail for an invitation to the next scheduled potluck!

## **Family and Home Ownership Program through EIRHA**

Why not make the decision to begin planning to own your own home? Enroll in the Family and Home Ownership Program today to start working with a staff member of the Eastern Iowa Regional Housing Authority.

Once enrolled in the Family and Home Ownership Program, participants can expect to meet with a staff member of the Eastern Iowa Regional Housing Authority who will assist them in setting realistic goals that will help prepare them to purchase a home. Examples of these goals are credit repair counseling, creating and maintaining a household budget, locating and maintaining employment and reliable transportation, and more!

To qualify for this program, you must currently be receiving Section 8 rental assistance through the Eastern Iowa Regional Housing Authority, or currently be residing in a Public Housing unit, owned by the Housing Authority.

For more information regarding this program, please contact Carl Reimer at either (563) 556-4166 or (800) 942-4648.



# The Residents' Corner

## Halloween Safety Tips

Have goblin or ghoul trick-or-treating this year?

Here are some tips to help keep them safe:

- Children should always go out trick or treating accompanied by a responsible adult. If you have a group of kids going, the parents should choose two or three of them to go along and keep an eye on things.
- Some towns set a curfew for trick or treating which makes it easier for townsfolk to know who's coming to their door. Make sure and stick to the curfew times and stick to subdivisions and areas with a lot of homes so your kids can get in as much trick or treating as possible in a few hours time.
- Plan a safe route so parents know where their older kids will be at all times. Set a time for their return home. Make sure that your child is old enough and responsible enough to go out by themselves. Make sure that they have a cell phone.
- Let your children know not to cut through back alleys and fields if they are out alone. Make sure they know to stay in populated areas and not to go off the beaten track. Let them know to stay in well lighted areas with lots of people around. Explain to them why it can be dangerous for kids not to do this. If they are going out alone, they are old enough to know what can happen to them in a bad situation and how to stop it from happening.
- Instruct your children not to eat any treats until they bring them home to be examined by you. This way you can check for any problem candy.
- Instruct your child to never go into the home of a stranger or get into their car. Explain why this is not a good idea and what to do if someone approaches them and tries to talk to them.
- Make sure your child carries a flashlight, glow stick or has reflective tape on their costume to make them more visible to cars.
- Let them know that they should stay together as a group if going out to Trick or Treat without an adult.

From: [Halloween.safety.com](http://Halloween.safety.com)

## Apple Crisp Recipe

- 7 tart apples, peeled, cored and sliced
- 4 teaspoons fresh lemon juice
- 1/2 teaspoon vanilla
- 1 cup brown sugar
- 1/2 teaspoon ground cinnamon
- 1 cup rolled oats
- 1/2 cup butter, room temperature

Preheat oven to 375°F. In a mixing bowl, combine apples, lemon juice, and vanilla. Toss to combine. Layer sliced apples in a 9 x 12-inch (or approximately the same size) baking pan. Combine brown sugar, cinnamon, and oatmeal in a bowl. Cut in the butter. Sprinkle sugar mixture over apples. Bake 45 minutes or until topping looks crunchy and apples are tender.

From: [simplyrecipes.com](http://simplyrecipes.com)

## Start Preparing For Winter

Follow these simple steps to save energy in your home as the colder months arrive:

- Drafts-According to the U.S. Department of Energy, drafts can waste 5% to 30% of your energy use. Place a rolled bath towel under a drafty door, or make a more attractive DIY draft snake with googly eyes, felt tongues and the like. You can use any scraps of fabric – even neckties – and fill with sand or kitty litter for heft.
- Furnace Filters-Replace or clean furnace filters once a month during the heating season. Dirty filters restrict airflow and increase energy demand.
- Reverse Your Ceiling Fan-Reversing your ceiling fan will push warm air downward and force it to recirculate, keeping you more comfortable.
- Soak Up the Sun-Use passive solar heating on sunnier days. Open drapes on south-facing windows to let in sunlight. *From: [ehow.com](http://ehow.com)*

## Tenant Protection

Are you protected by renter's insurance? If not, EIRHA urges you to consider purchasing a policy. Renter's insurance can provide protection for your personal property along with personal liability protection. Policies can be inexpensive, especially when combined with other insurance policies, such as automobile insurance. You can obtain a variety of quotes by visiting the following website: [www.answerfinancial.com](http://www.answerfinancial.com). You can also check your local yellow pages for insurance agencies. By shopping around, you can find the best policy for your needs.

# The Kid Zone

## October is Fire Safety Month

October is fire safety month, and this year's focus is on the importance of smoke alarms in the home.

Did you know that cooking is the #1 cause of home fires and injuries? During the years of 2003-2006, roughly 2/3 of home fire deaths occurred in homes with no smoke alarms or no working smoke alarms. Here are some additional quick facts regarding the importance of smoke alarms:

- Smoke alarms cut the risk of dying in a reported fire in half.
- Most homes (96%) have at least one smoke alarm (according to a 2008 telephone survey.)
- Overall, three-quarters of all U.S. homes have at least one working smoke alarm.
- Each year, nearly 3,000 people die in U.S. home fires.
- In more than half of the reported home fires in which the smoke alarms were present but did not operate even though the fire was large enough, batteries were missing or disconnected. Nuisance alarms were the leading reason for disconnected alarms.
- More than half of the smoke alarms found in reported fires and two-thirds of the alarms found in homes with fire deaths were powered by battery only.
- Most homes still have smoke alarms powered by battery only. In a 2007 American Housing Survey (AHS), 67% of the respondents who reported having smoke alarms said they were powered by battery only.
- In a 2008 telephone survey, only 12% knew that smoke alarms should be replaced every 10 years.
- In fires considered large enough to activate a smoke alarm, hard-wired alarms operated 91% of the time; battery-powered smoke alarms operated 75% of the time.
- Interconnected smoke alarms on all floors increase safety.
  - In a U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) survey of households with any fires, interconnected smoke alarms were more likely to operate and alert occupants to a fire. (This includes fires in which the fire department was not called.)

Information from: [nfpa.org](http://nfpa.org)

## Bat-O-Lanterns

Don't feel like making a mess this year by carving your pumpkin? Don't! Instead, let the kids help you transform an ordinary pumpkin into a bat-o-lantern!

### What You Need:

- Black acrylic paint
- Black and white craft foam
- Hole punch
- Glue dots
- Black duct tape
- Toothpicks
- Wooden skewers

### What You Do:

Cover your work surface with a drop cloth or newspaper, then paint the pumpkins. Allow them to dry completely. For each bat, cut out two identical eyes from the white craft foam and use the hole punch to make pupils. Adhere the eyes to the pumpkin with glue dots. Cut matching pairs of ears and wings from the black craft foam. Attach the ears by taping a toothpick to the back of each one, leaving about 1 1/2 inches of the toothpick exposed, then inserting it into the top of the pumpkin. Finally, tape a skewer to the back of each wing, leaving a 2-inch point exposed, and push it in place. Taken from: [familyfun.go.com](http://familyfun.go.com)

## Fun Halloween Recipe

Disguises aren't just for Halloween! Surprise your family with these spooky-looking Pizza Mummies!

### All You Need:

- English muffins
- Pizza sauce
- Black olives
- Scallions
- Red or green pepper
- Cheese sticks or slices

### All You Do:

- Heat the oven to 350° F. For each mummy, spread a tablespoon of pizza sauce onto half of an English muffin (toast it first, if you like)
- Set olive slices in place for eyes and add round slices of green onions or bits of red or green pepper for pupils.
- Lay strips of cheese (such as a pull-apart cheese stick) across the muffin for the mummy's wrappings.
- Bake for about 10 minutes or until the cheese is melted and the muffin is toasty.

Recipe from: [familyfun.go.com](http://familyfun.go.com)